

**CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP  
JUNE 25, 1998 MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS**

**Review of May 28 meeting notes**

No revisions were made to the May 28, CALFED Ops meeting notes.

**Announcements**

John Leahigh has replaced Art Hinojosa as CALFED Ops Scribe.

The Central Valley Steelhead life history presentation is scheduled for the August meeting.

The following handouts were provided at the meeting:

1. SWP Operations Package, DWR, L. Gage
2. Vernalis Flow and Delta Pumping graph, USBR, Burke
3. Splittail graph comparing salvage to pumping, daily basis, S. Ford
4. Splittail graph comparing salvage to pumping, CPUE basis, S. Ford
5. Letter to Patterson, USBR from Potter, DWR, Potter
6. Letter to Potter from Spear, USFWS, DWR, Potter
7. Letter correspondence between Nelson, SFBA, and Potter, DWR

**SWRCB**

The Bay-Delta Water Rights phase 1 hearing will open on July 1 with statement of qualifications, policy statements and evidentiary material. The phase 2 hearing is scheduled to begin July 14. Deadlines for exhibit submittals have been set for the first 7 of 8 phases. Exhibit submittals for phases 5, 6, and 7 are due on July 6, 13, and 20, respectively. At the end of the week of June 29 more hearing dates will be announced.

**UPDATE: According to the recent Notice received from SWRCB, dated July 2, 1998, the deadline for submitting evidence for Phase 5 has been suspended until further notice.**

The comment period ends July 13 for revised chapters 5, 6, and 13 of the SWRCB's draft EIR/EIS.

The comment period for the negative declaration for the CCWD temporary urgency water rights permit ended on the meeting date, June 25. A couple of letters have been submitted but no protests have been received. The requested

permit is to allow diversion to Los Vaqueros Reservoir while excess flows are available between July 1 and October 31 this year.

## **Operations**

CVP/SWP Operations Status: Lake Shasta and the Trinity River reservoirs are full. Water is being exported from the Trinity watershed to the Sacramento. Snowmelt runoff is believed to have peaked in this region. Keswick is releasing 15,000 cfs but expects to gradually reduce that amount.

Folsom Lake is experiencing high inflows and is gradually filling. All upstream reservoirs are full. Releases to the American River are edging downward.

Snowmelt runoff in the San Joaquin Valley watersheds is currently peaking with the exception of the Kings, Upper San Joaquin, and Tuolumne. These rivers are expected to experience peak runoff during the next 20 days. Flow at Vernalis has been steadily increasing and reservoir levels on the San Joaquin system are similar to what they were in 1995. The recent cool weather has been a benefit by slowing the rate of snowmelt. The cool weather has also been responsible for lower than normal demand from agricultural users. The Friant Water Users Authority has been asked to take in additional water at no charge to ease flood dangers on the San Joaquin River. Tracy pumping is at 50 percent of capacity and San Luis Reservoir remains full.

Lake Oroville is full and snowmelt inflow has been gradual due to the relatively low temperatures.

The California Aqueduct continues to take in Kern River Intertie water to aid in flood water relief. Inflow into the aqueduct has been as high as 1500 cfs. The Intertie was constructed in the 1970s to assist with flood control for the Tulare Lake Basin.

Delta Operations Criteria: There is abundant water in the system and there are no foreseeable problems meeting any standards. A total of two delta smelt have been salvaged at the fish facilities in June as of the meeting date.

Temporary Barriers: High flows continue at Vernalis and forecasted hydrology suggests that the three agricultural barriers will not be installed this year. DWR will continue to monitor conditions and will keep SDWA and other agencies updated on installation status.

## **Fishery Status**

Real Time Monitoring: The recommendation from DAT is to NOT extend the RTM program beyond June. A sufficient amount of data may be obtained from the 20 mm and mid-water trawl surveys to track the abundance and distribution of delta smelt.

**UPDATE: The DAT will meet on an as needed basis during July and August. The next regularly scheduled meeting is set for Tuesday, September 1, 1998.**

Delta smelt: Few delta smelt have been caught during RTM and the 20 mm surveys. Although RTM will end, the 20 mm surveys are scheduled to continue through August 29. The current distribution combined with the high inflows suggests most delta smelt will be well downstream of the Delta this summer.

Chinook Salmon: The Red Bluff Diversion Dam gates were initially opened in late May due to high flows in the Sacramento River. At the request of NMFS, the gates remained open an additional 5-6 days to improve passage for upstream migrating adult winter-run chinook. Low water demands within the Tehama-Colusa Canal service area allowed for the additional gates up period. Three redds have been identified downstream of the gates with an additional 40 found upstream. NMFS is concerned about lack of temperature control at the downstream redds. Carcass surveys indicate this is a healthy year for winter run.

DFG will present its recommendation on spring-run chinook status to the Fish and Game Commission on June 26. The recommendation will be made available to the public for comment on June 30. The Commission will formally receive the recommendation at its next meeting in early August and will most likely make a decision at the following meeting.

The comment period on the NMFS proposed rule to list fall, late fall, and spring run chinook will conclude June 30.

Steelhead: No steelhead have been caught in the RTM since June 8. No steelhead were salvaged at the CVP during June. The last reported salvage of steelhead at the SWP occurred on June 5. There is no update on the NMFS issuance of the ESA regulation under section 4(d). Although, the SWP and CVP are not prohibited on take at this time, after the 4(d) rule is issued, SWP and CVP will need authorization for take, which will be provided through a biological opinion.

Splittail: The NMFS comment period on the federal status of Sacramento splittail ends July 17, 1998.

Field sampling continues to indicate this is a very good recruitment year for Sacramento splittail. Young-of-year splittail have been caught in both Butte Creek and the low flow channel of the Feather River. Splittail catch continues in routine beach seining conducted by the FWS along the Sacramento River. However, the number caught has declined somewhat from late May. Splittail have been the second most abundant species caught in the Yolo Bypass. Variable numbers of splittail have been caught at the RTM stations. Splittail numbers peaked at about 6,500 total catch at Mossdale on June 9. Numbers have declined steadily since then, with a total of about 1,000 splittail caught at Mossdale on June 19. Over 34,000 splittail, ranging between 40-50 mm, have been captured by RTM crews to date.

Salvage rate at the facilities remains high reflecting their abundance in the system. In 1995, splittail salvage peaked in early-June, with a smaller peak occurring in late June. Similarly, 1998 splittail salvage appears to have peaked in mid-June, although not in as great of numbers.

#### **CVPIA-AFRP**

Vernalis Adaptive Management Plan: An internal draft of the EIR/EIS for the VAMP will be ready in mid-July. The draft will be available to the general public in the middle of September followed by a 60 day review period. The final document and Record of Decision are scheduled to be out in February of 1999.

The San Joaquin River began to experience positive net depletions for the first time on the week beginning June 21 which is quite unusual this late in the year.

Joint Point of Diversion: Due to the ongoing SWRCB Bay-Delta Hearings there has been very little progress by the NNG sub-groups tasked with joint point of diversion consensus building. The Operations, Fisheries, and Benefits sub-groups will meet the first week of July to discuss status of various studies that are ongoing.

#### CALFED Bay-Delta Program:

The NNG group will also facilitate meetings to discuss a set of measures, including JPD, that can be implemented in stage I. The "Toolbox" consists of actions that can be taken now and in the future to enhance water supply and improve conditions for the environment. Over the next two months criteria for evaluating the full list of measures will be developed; a prioritized list will be presented to the CALFED Policy Group in September.

CVPIA Operations Plan: DOI responded positively to DWR's April 16 letter and proposed plan for implementation of the AFRP Delta Actions. Therefore, it is

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likely that DWR will sign the statement of support for the San Joaquin River Agreement. DWR expressed concern that SDWA was not represented at this meeting and desires to mitigate any negative impacts SDWA may incur by the implementation of the Actions. The implementation of the plan is subject to progress of the NNG.

Another forum for the creation of tools to protect water quality in the south Delta would be to address the issue in a water bond similar to Proposition 204, which was passed in 1996. Whereas Proposition 204 included financing of projects on the Sacramento River, an effort should be made to include money for the San Joaquin River and south Delta in the next water bond.

**Agenda Items for the Next Meeting . . . July 23**